

NEWS RELEASE



***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
San Diego, California***

***United States Attorney
Carol C. Lam***

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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - April 26, 2006

United States Attorney Carol C. Lam announced the arraignment today of Walter B. Christopher, in federal court in San Diego on a charge of Theft of Public Property, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 641.

The charge in the indictment stems from a series of thefts allegedly committed by Christopher while he worked as a security guard for the Naval Exchange at the 32nd Street Naval Station. The Navy Exchange at the 32nd Street Naval Station is operated by the Navy Exchange System, a non-appropriated fund instrumentality of the Department of Defense and the Navy. The mission of the Navy Exchange System is to provide retail goods and services to servicemen and women at a savings and to support quality of life programs.

According to the indictment, on numerous occasions in April and May 2005, it is alleged that Christopher stole and converted to his own use items designated for retail sale from the Naval Exchange,

including computers, clothing, car stereo equipment, handbags, jewelry, and other merchandise. The merchandise has an estimated value of over \$80,000. The items subsequently were recovered from Christopher's home and vehicle.

Christopher entered a not-guilty plea today before United States Magistrate Judge Leo S. Papas. Bail was set at a \$10,000. He will next appear before United States District Court Judge Barry Ted Moskowitz on May 26, 2006, at 1:30 p.m. for motion hearing/trial setting.

DEFENDANT

WALTER B. CHRISTOPHER

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Theft of Public Property having a total value exceeding \$1,000 in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 641

Penalties: Maximum ten years' imprisonment. Maximum \$250,000 fine. Mandatory restitution of the value of property not returned.

AGENCY

Naval Criminal Investigative Service

An indictment is not evidence that the defendant committed the crimes charged. The defendant is presumed innocent until the Government meets its burden in court of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.